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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the literature about speech communication internship programs to determine how much is known about such programs, what approaches are used and/or advocated, and how they are perceived by those who participate in them and those who administer them. The paper reviews the literature within four categories: (1) reports of survey data about the pervasiveness of such programs; (2) accounts of student, faculty, and administrator perspectives of internship programs; (3) case studies of successful programs; and (4) prescriptive essays/commentaries on how communication internship programs could or should be operated. On the basis of this review, the paper gives recommendations for future inquiry and pragmatic development, and presents a Practice-to-Theory-to-Practice systems model for incorporation into these programs. A figure of the model and another figure are included; 26 references are attached. (SR)

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SPEECH COMMUNICATION INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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Abstract

A fair amount of literature has been written by scholars about speech communication internship programs. The purpose of this paper was to examine this literature, specifically to determine how much is known about such programs, what approaches are used and/or advocated, and how they are perceived by those who participate in them and those who administer them. On the basis of this review, recommendations for future inquiry and pragmatic development are advanced, and a Practice-to-Theory-to-Practice systems model for incorporation into these programs is presented.

Speech Communication Internship Programs: A Review of the Literature

Much attention has been given in the literature to internships in speech communication departments over the past 13 years. As part of this interest, a number of panels have been assembled at national and regional conventions by speech communication scholars to examine internship programs. Journal articles have appeared on the subject in the Association for Communication Administration Bulletin, Communication Education, and other similar outlets. These journal articles and convention papers can be divided into four principal types: (a) reports of survey data about the pervasiveness of such programs; (b) accounts of student, faculty, and administrator perspectives of internship programs; (c) case studies of successful internship programs; and (d) prescriptive essays/commentaries on how communication internship programs could or should be operated. While the majority of these journal articles and convention papers have focused upon general speech communication programs, a few have focused more narrowly on sub-areas within speech communication departments (e.g., organizational communication).

The purpose of this paper was to review this literature, in particular as it has developed within these categories,

as a means to assess how much is known about such programs, what approaches are used and/or advocated, and how they are perceived by those who participate in them and those who administer them.

Surveys of Communication Internship Programs

In a survey of 98 universities, Downs and Larimer (1974) found that 61 offered an organizational curriculum and of those, 24 provided practicum/internship experiences. Of these internship programs, 13 were found to be in operation for a year of less and only one had been in existence for more than four years. This report was based upon data collected in 1973.

In a subsequent report outlining the results of a survey of the 24 institutions cited above, in which 80% responded, Downs (1975) provided descriptive information about the nature of these internship programs: (a) internships were offered late in a student's program and usually lasted an entire term; (b) about half of the universities offered the internship every term, while 40% offered the opportunity only when it could be arranged; (c) all of the institutions placed undergraduate students in internships while only nine placed graduate students; (d) the number of interns handled per term ranged from one to 23; (e) the majority of internship programs had more than five sponsoring organizations, with most

accepting interns on a repeat basis; (f) these internships were located in a variety of organizations, including mass media organizations, banks, private retail stores, large and small industrial plants, hospitals, and government agencies; (g) intern tasks were said to be generated by the sponsoring organization, calling the intern to work in some observer-researcher-worker combination; (h) interns universally received academic credit, usually at the rate of 6 hours; (i) performance evaluation criteria included written papers, reports by the organization, and oral reports; (j) generally interns met with their faculty supervisors three or four times per term; and (k) a principal concern for interns was pay.

In addition, Downs (1975) noted two problems perceived by faculty in administering these programs: (a) the identification of sponsoring programs, with the faculty member typically being responsible for seeking out organizations to place the interns generally through personal visits or telephone conversations; and (b) ambiguity about their role, since their programs were relatively new and the sponsoring organizations maintained as much control as they did over the interns.

In an internship program survey of Association of Communication Administration member private and public institutions conducted in 1980, Konsky (1982) received a return of 243 questionnaires. For the purposes of the

study, only undergraduate internships were examined at institutions offering the A.A. to Ph.D. degree. Seventy-eight percent of the institutions reported having speech communication internships. The 36-item questionnaire was divided into four areas: (a) program background and history; (b) program procedures; (c) program outcomes; and (d) program development concerns. Among the institutions surveyed, internship programs had been in operation for less than six months in 3.2% of them and for more than five years in 33% of them. Forty-three percent of the universities reported having 1-10 interns, with 31% having 11-25 interns and 15.8% having 26-50 interns.

In 51.4% of these programs, only majors were eligible to participate, while in 30.8% of them non-majors were allowed to do so. A minimum grade point average was required in 56.6% of the programs. For 72.1% of these programs, standard procedures had been established; for the remaining 27.9% they had not. Size of the program seemed to be a factor in this regard, with larger programs adopting such procedures. Variable responses were given to the question about the number of hours of internship work per credit hour, but the majority answers were as follows: (a) 21-30 hours, 15.5%; (b) 31-40 hours, 22.6%; and (c) 41-50 hours, 29.0%. The majority of institutions (45.9%) reported a combination of the faculty, student, and agency site making the contact to establish an

internship. For 77.0% of the programs, the students wrote a paper, while 52.5% of the programs required a daily log or journal of some kind, this document being turned in at the end of the internship in only 42.2% of the cases. In 62.8% of the programs the interns were sometimes paid, for another 31.7% of the programs the interns were never paid, and for the remaining 5.5% of the programs the interns were always paid. The administration of 65.6% of the programs was carried out by one faculty member. Central administrative units existed for 76.8% of the programs. In 61.9% of the cases the faculty were not compensated for their administrative time. On-site visitations were made by 46.7% of the programs always, by 41.2%, sometimes, and by 12.1%, never. For 75.5% of the programs, interns were evaluated by both the faculty and agency supervisors. The majority of programs (61.2%) evaluated interns on a regular graded basis, as opposed to a pass-fail basis (20.2%), either of these systems (10.9%), or another system (7.7%).

Faculty, Student, and Administrator Perspectives

Two pieces in the communication literature have solely focused on the collection of student or administrator perceptions of internship programs. In addition, two publications incorporated student and faculty perceptions of internship programs as part of larger surveys covering a multitude of issues related to these programs.

Arnold (1986) provided a report of student perspectives based upon data gathered from interns for two years in the Department of Communication at Arizona State University. No attempt was made by the researcher to quantify the data. Depending upon the type of internship involved, students varied in their opinions about what courses should be taken prior to undertaking the experience. However, on the basis of the data collected, three overall conclusions could be reached: (a) students believed there should be a greater emphasis on writing, particularly business writing, in the curriculum; (b) students felt they needed a greater understanding of computers; and (c) students believed they needed a basic understanding of the internship organization prior to getting there.

As part of a larger survey, Downs, Harper and Hunt (1976) assessed speech communication student perceptions of internship programs. Specifically, 42 interns from three different universities were surveyed. The majority of these interns established their own internships, with 47% acquiring them from a faculty supervisor. Sixty percent of those surveyed had been paid by the internship site. On the basis of responses to ten structured, five-interval scales, it was learned that these interns were highly to moderately satisfied with various aspects of their program (in order of satisfaction level): the internship as an educational experience, the site's

interest in the internship, the amount of credit given, the degree to which the internship was seen as preparing the student for the work situation, site supervision, evaluation methods, length of the internship, program orientation, relevance of the curriculum to the internship, and instructor supervision. The authors pointed out that the three last items, the ones the students were the least satisfied with, represented concerns under the control of the faculty supervisor.

The interns were given six open-ended items to answer in the survey in addition to the structured ones. The responses to these six items revealed three broad concerns: (a) the need for more course work before the search for regular employment, specifically in interviewing, business law, and communication theory; (b) the need for better placement techniques in matching the student intern with a sponsoring organization; and (c) the need to create a better tie between communication theory taught in the classroom and that applied in the pragmatic context.

As part of her comprehensive survey of internship programs, Konsky (1982) obtained student and faculty perceptions of internship programs through the institutional respondent (the internship administrator) completing the questionnaire. Students were described as generally very favorably disposed toward internships (80.1%). Faculty, likewise, indicated a favorable attitude but with less

intensity: 57.5%, very favorable; 27.1%, moderately favorable; and 9.9%, somewhat favorable. About 85% of the respondents indicated that internships were "very helpful" or "moderately helpful" in their acquiring jobs. When the faculty were asked how the students found internships useful, the four main response categories were: (a) valuable contacts/references, (b) skill development/experience in the work environment, (c) job offers, and (d) personal development. In terms of program development concerns, faculty identified four: (a) too many or too few students expressing interest for the number of available internships; (b) problems with finding and keeping an adequate number of quality sites, with location being a disadvantage for some departments; (c) program procedure difficulties, such as pay for interns, evaluations, and credit hour allocations; and (d) the need for more time for faculty to develop their programs.

Hellweg (1987) conducted a survey of administrators noted in the 1985 Speech Communication Association Directory. Two criteria were imposed upon the selection of these individuals: that they be in positions equivalent to or hierarchically above that of a college dean, and that they be from institutions which offered at least a bachelor's degree. Of the 45 questionnaires sent out, 25, or 56%, were returned. Eighty-eight percent of those surveyed reported that their universities had undergraduate speech

communication internship programs, 36% at the graduate level. Of the 44% of the respondents who indicated that their institutions had cooperative education programs, 64% reported a speech communication component within them.

When asked if internships should be part of every speech communication department, 83% of the administrators responded affirmatively; only 20% felt it should be a requirement. The respondents believed internships could benefit students through the application of theory to practice in a work environment, getting an edge on the job market, and the development of important contacts. When asked to rank seven items as potential ways for a department to maintain a quality program, the respondents generated the following list, with their highest ranked item first: (a) being selective about what students got in, (b) ensuring frequent student-faculty interaction, (c) having faculty actively seek out internship opportunities in the community, (d) having site supervisors interview intern applicants prior to accepting them, (e) having faculty visit the student intern sites, (f) assigning interns academic work related to the internship, and (g) keeping the internship program small in size. In response to a question about how interns should be evaluated, the administrators gave the following answers: (a) fourteen percent indicated the evaluation should be based totally on site work, (b) thirty-six percent said it should be a

50-50 split between academic and site work, and (c) fifty percent felt 75% of the evaluation should be based on site work and 25% on academic work. Seventy-six percent of the respondents favored credit/no credit designations; 24% preferred letter grades. Half of the administrators felt that the site supervisor and faculty member should share the evaluation responsibility evenly, while 21% advocated a 75%-25% split and another 21% advocated the opposite ratio. When asked if uniformity should be imposed upon internship programs across a campus, the administrators, generally speaking, thought this was "not necessarily" a good idea; they were more against such uniformity in regard to the number of internship units allowed within the major but more positive on uniformity of application procedures.

Case Studies of Communication Internship Programs

A number of internship program case studies have been reported in the speech communication literature. Wolvin and Jamieson (1974) described the communication internship program at the University of Maryland in an article which also outlined the rationale for and benefits of such a program in general. At the time of the article, they indicated that their program had developed 64 internships in the previous two and one-half years within the metropolitan Washington area. They characterized the focus of their program as being largely governmental

because of their proximity to the nation's capital. In the article they provided examples of specific internship opportunities their students had undertaken, provided a sample contract, and discussed some of various logistical factors associated with such internships, such as faculty time commitment, selection of students, and potential partisanship difficulties in working with governmental concerns.

Porterfield (1975) provided an account of the development of the internship program in the speech department at Appalachian State University, where in the first four quarters twelve majors had completed the program. The department housed speech communication, theatre, and broadcasting, and these areas were reflected in the internships which were set up. The article explained procedural considerations for the program and then outlined four benefits for students participating in the program, with the author concluding that the benefits outweighed any problems which might be encountered.

Pence and Jarrard (1979) offered detailed information about the activities engaged in by their interns in the speech communication department at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Along with this analysis they provided tips about how an internship program could and should be operated, as a function of their experience. It is perhaps interesting to note that at the time they

described their program as the only internal academic department at the University actively developing such a program for undergraduate and graduate students.

Pollock and Mopps (1976) offered information about a specialized type of internship program at the University of Florida which provided speech communication instructional support to Brevard Community College and other local community colleges. Individuals participating in the program had to have completed their master's degree as well as other course work and experiential requirements, including two graduate level teaching practicums. In the article the authors spelled out the specific procedures which were followed in the program, such as how assignments were made, academic work associated with the internship, and evaluative processes, as well as the benefits to all concerned.

Hanson (1984) provided an account of the redefining process of the communication department internship program at Rutgers University over a three-year period when the number of interns grew from three to five per semester to 50 to 60 per semester. As part of her analysis, she offered counsel on the basis of this experience on preliminary considerations in this development, student selection procedures, procuring internship sites, the responsibilities of the faculty program coordinator, and the evaluation process.

Hyre and Owens (1984) described their internship program in speech communication (telecommunications) at Youngstown State University, which was initiated in 1976. In their article, they discussed how specific internships were established, the length of an internship in their program, student hours required at the site, academic credits involved, remuneration, the student selection process, academic assignments, and the evaluation process.

In contrast to some of the other case studies in the literature, Larson and Novak (1985) described a specific internship opportunity established between Northern Illinois University and Northern Illinois Radio Information Service (NIRIS). The article outlined the various programming tasks the 14 broadcasting students chose to undertake on this project in putting together original, self-contained radio shows for the blind or visually-handicapped listeners.

Finally, Adams (1986) outlined the development of the internship program in the newly formed speech communication and theatre arts department at Texas A & M University, concentrating in particular on the placement of students at internship sites and proposing or guiding the interns toward research questions to be answered through the experience. In addition to outlining this information, he provided a copy of a solicitation letter to organizations in the community to procure internships, a sample

application form, and a syllabus for the course.

Prescriptive Information and Commentary

The final category in the speech communication internship literature involves basically prescriptive information advocating the use of certain policies and procedures in the administration of such programs and commentary on various issues related to them. Among the policies and procedures discussed in these articles and papers are: (a) selection of students for internships; (b) the initiation party for an internship (faculty, student, agency site, or a combination thereof); (c) the negotiation process; (d) types of internship activities appropriate to speech communication; (e) the application process; (f) the academic assignments augmenting the internship work; (g) grading policy/intern evaluation; (h) credit hour allocation; and (i) the duties of the faculty coordinator.

There is a general agreement among the authors of this literature that there are a number of benefits of an internship program in speech communication (e.g., Falcione, 1977; Hanson, 1984; Housel & Woods, 1982; Huseman, 1975; Konsky, 1977, 1982; Porterfield, 1975; Wolvin & Jamieson, 1974), namely that (a) they allow students to test the application of theoretical concepts acquired in the classroom; (b) they provide students the opportunity to

evaluate communication as a participant within, and observer of, ongoing relationships within organizations; (c) they provide students with valuable contacts in the professional community; (d) they help students affirm or reject their career choice; (e) they sometimes lead to job offers for students; (f) they stimulate curriculum currency; (g) they promote the utility of a speech communication degree in the business community; (h) they allow organizations to screen out potential employees; and (i) they engender university-community cooperation.

Alexander (1975) contended that an internship or work experience program should have a two-fold goal allowing a student to participate in an inductive process, providing him an opportunity "to learn through viewing and actually putting theory into practice," and a deductive process, providing him an opportunity "to generalize his own theories from the experiences he encounters" (p. 26).

Wolvin and Jamieson (1974) developed a set of specific speech communication internship objectives for student participants:

1. To learn specific components of the communication process.
2. To develop and test concepts involving the communication process.
3. To develop interpersonal facility in a communication work environment.

4. To gain feedback on communication work.
5. To provide an opportunity to develop and to demonstrate competence in communication.
6. To contribute to career decision making. (p. 5)

Hyre and Owens (1984) advocated "very tight control of all facets of the internship program" (p. 371). Their justification is built around four reasons: (a) to ensure that the student receives the best possible experience and education, (b) to minimize the potential for problems to emerge, (c) to ensure the confidence of the agency sites in what the department is trying to accomplish, and (d) to contribute to the reputation of the program.

Hanson (1984) argued that before a new internship program is established the department and institution should consider four issues: practicality, academic integrity, the economy, and the resources available. On the first issue, practicality, the author suggested that unless departments offer some skill-related courses, internships may not be a workable option. On the issue of academic integrity, Hanson purported that there are three structural options for the determination of student hours in the field and the awarding of academic credit: (a) alternating programs, where the student is placed in the organization throughout the work week and then returns to the university full time the following term; (b) parallel programs, where the student is concurrently enrolled at the

university and spends a limited period of time at the internship site; and (c) independent study, where the student works as a volunteer at an agency and subsequently puts together written academic work, all under the sponsorship of a faculty member on a special basis. The third issue for consideration which Hanson brought up is the viability of economic support for interns. Finally, the author addressed the issue of resources, primarily the availability of a faculty member to administer the program.

Pace (1979) contended that "interns should be placed in organizations that can provide the broadest, most comprehensive, most in-depth experience possible for students" (p. 3). Housel and Woods (1982) suggested that despite the fact that communication students compete with business students in acquiring internships in companies, the former are capable of working in personnel, public relations, advertising, sales, marketing, and public information departments. Likewise, Pace (1979) characterized potential organizational communication internships into five location categories: personnel and employee relations, training and development, community and public relations, marketing and sales management, and consulting and research. Housel and Woods (1982) cited lack of trust on the part of organizations for student interns to engage in consulting activities.

Abelman (1986) distinguished between the internship experiences provided to students at non-profit organizational sites, small profit organizational sites, and large corporations. He argued that interns working at non-profit organizations either end up "doing a little bit of everything or concentrating on a single task for the duration of the internship," such that they often find themselves missing "the necessary expertise or available professional personnel to offer constructive criticism and lend support" (p. 74). In this case he suggested that the intern may benefit by having to learn to be resourceful and creative but may also formulate "inaccurate expectations of how a full-time professional would conduct the same tasks" and may get "false perceptions of the quality of his/her work" (p. 74). He also warned against this student generalizing his impressions of the work environment to profit-making organizations (e.g., in regard to access to a general manager or head supervisor and autonomy in an entry-level position).

Abelman (1986) suggested that small, profit-centered companies allow "students to prove themselves and obtain additional responsibility based on merit and hard work" (p. 74). He cautioned, however, that students in this type of organization may have to work extra hours, engage in activities which might not be considered educational, or perform work which is out of the scope of the internship

agreement.

Finally, Abelman (1986) contended that large corporations may offer interns an opportunity to learn a great deal through their "simply observing and absorbing the atmosphere" (p. 74). However, he also pointed out potential unionization problems and the "company line" voiced through its supervisors that it is not a "teaching facility."

Phelps and Timmis (1984) described a number of internship site possibilities (and associated activities) which could be successfully undertaken outside of a large metropolitan center by speech communication students. In attempting to procure internship sites, Abelman (1986) advocated: (a) finding out what the organization's needs are and determining how the intern could satisfy those needs; (b) ascertaining who in the organization has the authority to approve the internship; and (c) finding out if the organization has had speech communication interns before, as well as the outcome of these experiences.

Hyre and Owens (1984) cautioned against putting interns in organizations where company representatives are only looking for cheap labor and intend to offer a minimal educational experience. They further add that it is important to talk directly to the individual in the company who will be involved in the internship to properly ascertain particular needs, requirements, expectations,

etc., as well as to gain a commitment to the program.

Hanson (1984) suggested that one of the best ways to recruit students for a departmental internship program is to have former interns come to classes and describe their experiences. Both Hanson and Abelman (1984) addressed the difficulty of assessing student character traits in screening applicants. While objective criteria may be easy to assess (grade point average, course work completed, etc.), student motivation, maturity, professionalism, and ability to serve in a subordinate role may be much more difficult to evaluate. Konsky (1977) and Hanson advocated the use of letters of recommendation from other faculty or former employers. Hanson further recommended an in-depth interview with the faculty coordinator.

Alexander (1975) pointed to the fact that when student interns enter the organization, they immediately face a barrage of ambiguous stimuli. He further contended that the success of the internship will depend upon the student's ability to select from among this barrage the relevant and important stimuli. According to Alexander, in addition to preparatory course work, the intern needs guidance from the faculty coordinator to connect experience in the organization to principles learned in the classroom and to synthesize the information meaningfully; otherwise, the student will view this experience through a narrow perspective.

Two problems surfaced in the literature about establishing and maintaining speech communication internship programs which have only been briefly mentioned herein but not discussed. One such problem is that of procuring pay for interns. Perrill and MacDonald (1982) noted that some companies cannot pay student interns because of internal regulations (e.g., nonprofit-making concerns) or simply a lack of funds, while other organizations have regulations which require such payment. Companies with layoffs present still another dilemma. Hyre and Owens (1984) argued that the term "stipend" puts interns into a different category than employees. This allows companies to avoid having to pay unemployment insurance after internships are completed, and it takes some pressure off the student which an employee might feel in relationship to the company. According to Hyre and Owens, organizations that pay interns also view them as more than "office aides."

A second problem is that of securing faculty time to administer an internship program. Wolvin and Jamieson (1974) contended that no less than ten hours per student intern be required to operate an internship program. According to Konsky (1977), the faculty coordinator's role involves:

(1) development of application and evaluation procedures,

(2) screening of students interested in participation in the internship program,

(3) contacting agencies regarding placement of interns,

(4) disseminating information to students regarding internships,

(5) clarifying role of student, agency, and faculty supervisor throughout the internship, and

(6) nurturing existing placements while attempting to develop new kinds of opportunities. (p. 15)

With as much as an internship coordinator needs to do, it is perhaps then ironic to see that only 27.8% of the faculty in the Konsky (1982) study reported earlier are compensated by their universities for their administrative time on their internship programs.

Konsky (1982) further argued that centralization of an internship program through a single faculty member is advantageous by preventing duplication of effort, offering a central unit for information processing, keeping the contact point unambiguous for the agency sites, providing for a starting point in the event that problem solving is needed, and assuring students of a standardized procedure.

Conclusions

Speech communication internships have become an increasingly pervasive part of the university curriculum

and a more widely recognized useful component to augment classroom education in the discipline over the past 13 years. Konsky (1977) attributed this growth to a changing job market demanding greater visibility of graduates; she also pointed to a concurrent broadening of the discipline from its roots in rhetoric and public speaking to interpersonal communication, small group communication, and organizational communication. Huseman (1975), likewise, suggested that while speech communication students once became teachers upon graduation, they now are in competition with business majors for jobs in business and government, pointing to the importance of internship programs as a form of pragmatic training. Pace (1987), in fact, suggested that internship programs are most commonly justified as career preparation education.

On the basis of the preceding reviews, a few directions for future inquiry can be advocated. First, the speech communication literature reported in this analysis has focused upon what has been labeled as internship programs or work-experience programs. Hanson (1984) noted three structural forms for such programs: (a) alternating programs, where students spend a term at the internship site full time and then return to the classroom; (b) parallel programs, where students spend a term at the internship site while also undertaking their classroom experiences; and (c) independent study, where students work as volunteers

at the internship site under the sponsorship of a faculty member. The first programmatic category, also perhaps designated as cooperative education, is described in only one piece (Hellweg, 1987) in the literature reviewed for this analysis as a practice being exercised in speech communication departments. This piece simply indicates that such programs are practiced; no details are provided. Details about these programs are needed, including the circumstances under which each is most effective.

Second, the two principal data-gathering studies examining the pervasiveness of speech communication internships (Downs, 1975; Konsky, 1982) involved data collections in 1973 and 1980. The first of these studies conducted at a relatively early stage in the generation of these programs focused upon activities in organizational communication specifically, while the second one focused upon speech communication as a whole. If these programs have been steadily on the rise, it would seem that another such study would be warranted.

Third, the majority of descriptive and prescriptive pieces on speech communication internship programs depict the academic assignment associated with the field experience as a daily log or journal which focuses upon tying classroom concepts to site activity. What seems to be missing from these analyses, however, is a discussion of exactly how these ties are achieved.

Fourth, generally speaking, the internship literature in speech communication makes little mention of graduate-level field activities. Downs (1975) isolated some internship offerings in organizational communication programs; Pence and Jarrard (1979) made mention of one at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. If, indeed, graduate-level internship programs are pervasive, it would be worthwhile to surface them in a future data-generating study on speech communication internships in general and provide detail about them specifically.

Additional pragmatically oriented research questions which deserve study in the speech communication internship literature include:

1. Is there any correlation between paid internships and the quality of the internship experience?

2. What are the expectations of organizations relative to speech communication intern skills as a match to their needs?

3. What placement techniques ensure a better match between students and a host organization?

4. What are the most effective techniques for evaluation of student progress in an internship?

5. Should students be required to intern in both profit and nonprofit organizations?

The literature on internships in the discipline is pragmatically valuable to those individuals starting up

internship programs in their departments and to those who have administered them for a period of time. There are varied accounts of successful programs, both broad in scope and narrowly specialized, ones in urban metropolitan centers benefitting by their proximity to industry to those in more rural locations, ones specializing in a particular area of the discipline (e.g., political communication or organizational communication), and ones relatively small to those relatively large in size. In addition to these in-depth descriptive accounts, the data-gathering studies reported herein provide an internship coordinator solid generalized information about how internship programs across the country are operated and how those who participate in them and those who administer them perceive them. Finally, some prescriptive analyses and commentaries are useful in providing information about how speech communication internship programs should be run and the problems which can be encountered with them. Not surprisingly, the majority of this literature has appeared in the Association for Communication Administration Bulletin and Communication Education and on specially formulated convention panels on internship programs or career preparation in the discipline. What is perhaps surprising is that as this 13-year progression has been evidenced in the literature, only one textbook has appeared in the field to augment course offerings associated with

such internships (Hellweg & Falcione, 1985).

Incorporation of a Systems Model

An internship's success is largely based on a professor's ability to help students recognize individual differences and to help them find an appropriate work environment which stimulates growth and development through the application of theories learned in the classroom. Student development theory can be useful in providing us with a language which allows us to better understand and evaluate the developmental stages of interns.

A systems model of Practice-to-Theory-to-Practice (Wells & Knefelkamp, 1982) provides us with a theoretical foundation for assessing the learning process associated with internships. The model consists of five phases: (1) Practice, (2) Description, (3) Translation, (4) Prescription, and (5) Practice. (This model has been successfully used by Professor Kathleen Bands at Hood College, Frederick, Maryland.) Figure 1 shows the process of the P-T-P model. The specific components of the P-T-P model are more fully explained below.

1. Identify concerns. This phase consists of identifying the cognitive domain of skills and abilities necessary to function successfully in an organizational environment. The focus of this phase is on the individual student's self-assessment. Learning styles inventory,

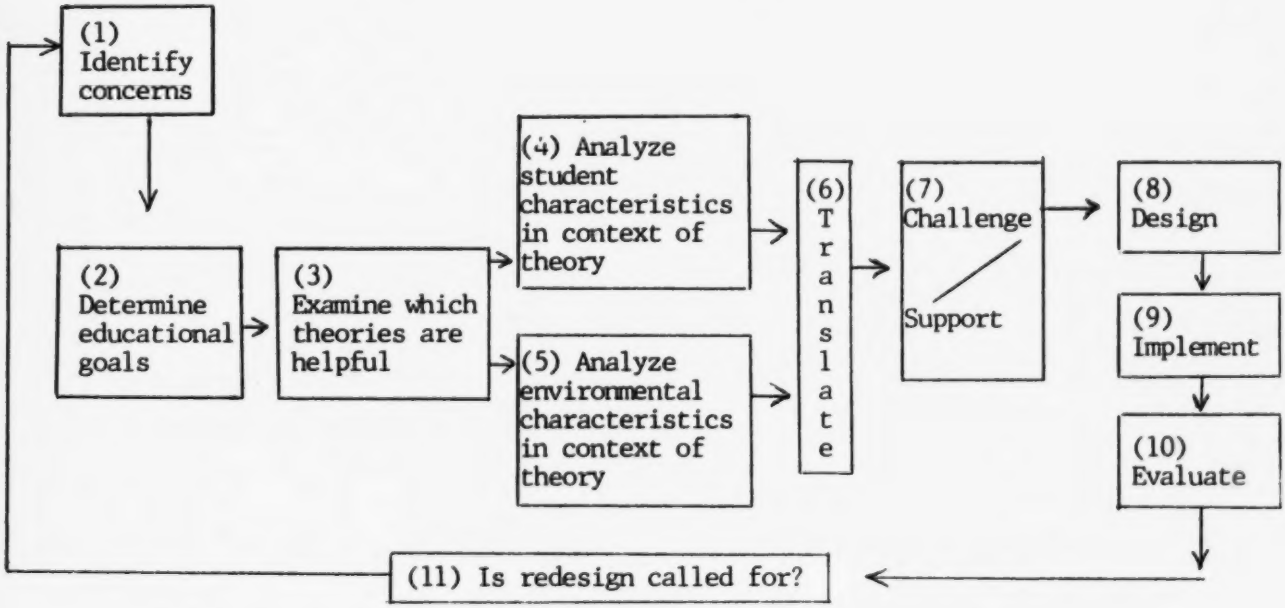
(1) Identify concerns
(2) Determine educational goals
(3) Examine which theories are helpful
(4) Analyze student characteristics in context of theory
(5) Analyze environmental characteristics in context of theory
(6) Translate
(7) Challenge / Support
(8) Design
(9) Implement
(10) Evaluate
(11) Is redesign called for?

Figure 1. A systems model of Practice-to-Theory-to-Practice (P-T-P).

Meyers-Briggs, Strong-Campbell Inventory, "Discover," a computerized career program, and values clarification exercises are implemented during this first phase.

2. Determine educational goals outcomes. The objectives of this phase are to determine the strengths and developmental needs of individual students, and to determine the "fit" between the students' strengths and the needs of the organization. Specific communication and career-oriented skills are also developed during this phase.

3. Examine helpful theories. The objective of this phase is to examine the learning theories which most appropriately apply to individual students so that they can gain maximum benefit from their internship experience. Specifically, the following models are helpful:

a. Psycho-Social Model: Contends that development occurs as the individual interacts with the larger environment, and there is sequential movement through a series of life stages, with each stage building on the ones before. The objective of this model is to relate course content and skill learning to where students are in their own development. The focus is on transition from the classroom to the "real world" in order to facilitate adjustment. This model assumes that students need to know where they are

developmentally, and be provided with challenge and support. They are not pushed to make decisions before they are ready. Instead, issues are identified, new roles and required skills are rehearsed, followed by feedback from the instructor. The classroom learning environment is entirely supportive and non-judgmental.

b. Cognitive Development Model: This model focuses on how students interpret and organize information. The model requires a series of prerequisite courses which builds toward the internship as a culminating experience. This sequential process moves from the simple to the more complex by providing students with both challenge and support through structured experiential activities designed to help them be better prepared for the "real world" internship experience.

c. Typology Model: This model emphasizes individual differences and seeks environments which reward certain personality types. The students develop specific skills associated with their personality types. Various assessment instruments are used to determine individual patterns concerning their values, interests, learning styles and sources of motivation. Students are able to benefit from insight into their own personalities, and are

encouraged to expand their skills through practice, rehearsal, and feedback.

d. Person-Environment Interaction Model: This model emphasizes that individuals have needs and interests best met in certain environments, and that the appropriate fit of the individual to the environment will produce satisfaction and motivation. This fit can best be accomplished by the previously discussed models and activities.

4. Analyze student characteristics based on theoretical models. Using the theoretical models as a basis for analyzing individual student needs, strengths, and skills, one can more effectively guarantee a learning experience which will benefit the student and the organization.

5. Analyze environmental and organizational characteristics. While the theoretical models can be useful for analyzing student needs, they can also be employed for analyzing the environmental needs of host organizations, specifically looking at organizational requirements, values, advantages, disadvantages, and necessary skills required in the internship.

6. Analyze sources of developmental challenge and support in both student and organizational characteristics/ requirements. The students and instructors can decide on the weight(s) to be given to assignments and/or functions. What types of assignments and projects might be most

beneficial to the student, how the class and/or internship will be structured, required rules and policies are all topics which can be collaboratively developed.

7. Re-analyze goals/outcomes. This phase is designed to evaluate the fit between student and organization, and to make sure the goals will be effectively addressed.

8. Design the learning process. Based on a better understanding of students' strengths, needs, and skills, as well as a clear understanding of the organizational needs and requirements, an agreement is made between the instructor, student, and organizational supervisor.

9. Implement educational experience. Maintain ongoing communication with student and organizational supervisor so that mutual expectations are being met.

10. Evaluate goals. Evaluate the mutually agreed on goals for the internship, including student and organizational satisfaction, learning acquired, and behavior changes.

11. Re-evaluate if necessary. Refine, redesign, reconceptualize, and amend for future students and organizations.

The process can be conceptualized as an interaction among three major components: (1) Individual Assessment, (2) Required Skills, and (3) Internship Field Experience. Figure 2 shows that interaction.

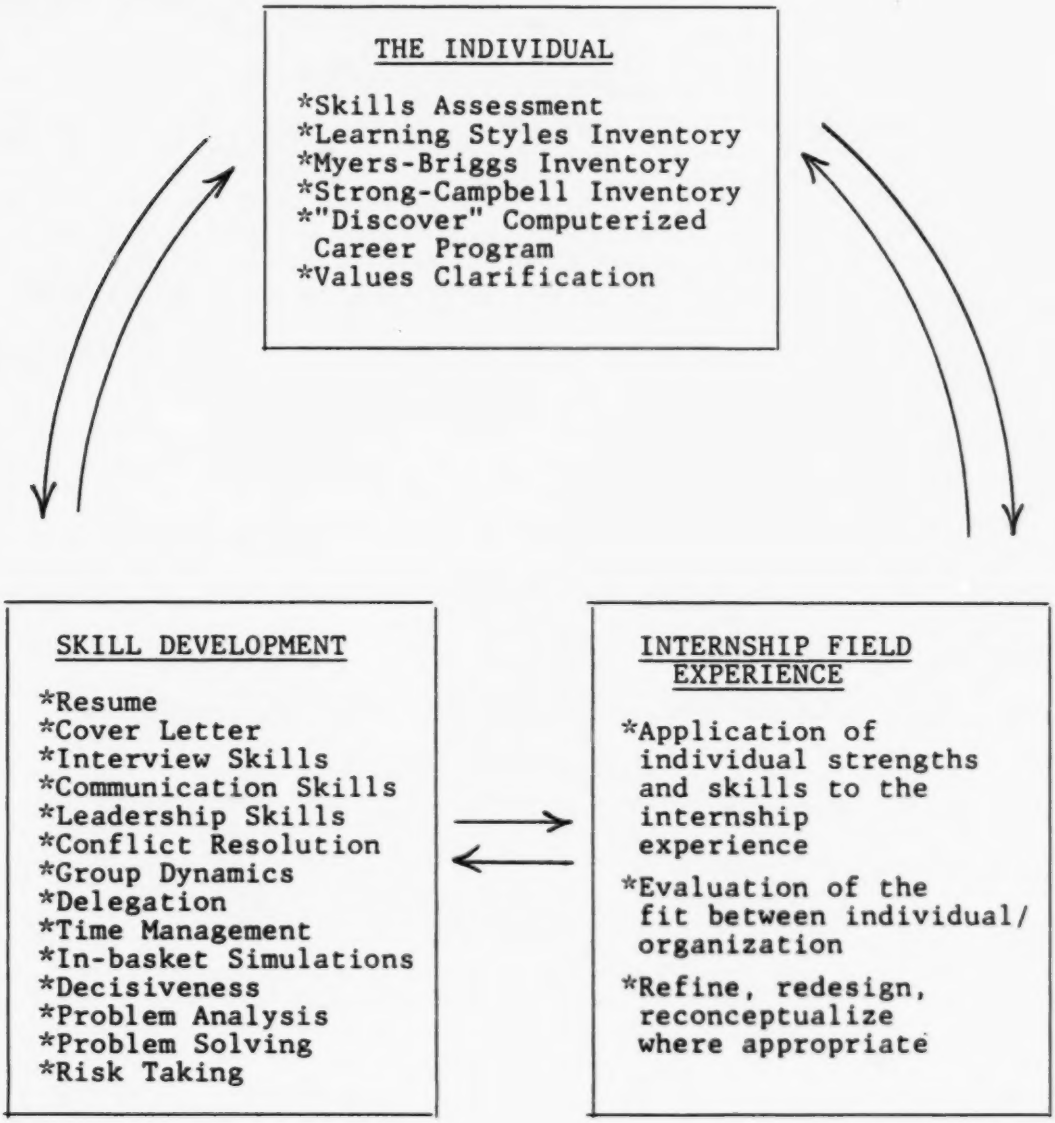

Figure 2. Interaction among components.

Pragmatic Recommendations

While we recognize that some of the following pragmatic recommendations may change after more rigorous empirical research is performed, we would still like to offer them based on this review and our own experience as directors of such programs.

1. Professors should be given release time and resources for being in charge of an internship program.

2. Rigorous selection criteria should be maintained for students. Students should not be automatically allowed to take an internship.

3. First- and second-year students should not be allowed to participate in an internship field experience, unless unusual circumstances such as age and job experience exist.

4. Professors should support and even encourage paid internships or expenses for the student, unless it is against the organization's policy or capability.

5. If possible, students should participate in internships in both nonprofit and profit-making organizations.

6. All internships should have an academic "product" submitted for evaluation.

7. Internships should include individual assessment and skill building components prior to the actual field experience in order to enhance the individual/organization

fit and the effectiveness of the field experience.

8. The P-T-P Model should be applied to the internship process, as appropriate.

9. Alternative designs should be considered. These might include assessment and skill building for a portion of the semester, and the field experience in the remainder of the term; the internship could also be a two-semester course, if practical. On the graduate level, an individual or team of interns might conduct consulting activities in an organization for a portion of their time while enrolled in the internship class, and then report back their experiences and use of intervention strategies in the structured setting to share them with others.

These are merely a few suggestions for conducting internship programs. It is our opinion that the internship process can be an enlightening experience for the student, the professor, and the host organization. Everyone will benefit if the internship experience is based on sound student development models and is given the proper administrative support that it deserves.

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